

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Nationwide Children's Hospital App Aims To Help Families Manage Asthma**

**COLUMBUS, Ohio** – Very early on in her life, 3-year-old Karma Taylor found herself frequently in the Emergency Department in the middle of the night as a result of breathing problems. Karma's mom, Joyce Kelso, felt like she was chasing after her daughter's asthma rather than staying ahead of it.

"As a mom, there was nothing more terrifying than knowing Karma wasn't able to breathe," said Joyce. "It's scary, especially when you can hear your child wheezing and struggling that way."

After the family's pediatrician referred them to Nationwide Children's Hospital to see an asthma specialist, Joyce downloaded AsthmaCare, a mobile app developed by experts at Nationwide Children's designed to help patients and their families better manage their asthma. Because of this resource, Karma has improved significantly.

"It was definitely hard to keep track of her medicines, appointments and triggers. Now, I can set medication reminders and keep track of all her symptoms," said Joyce. "It's just made life a lot easier for Karma. She's not going to the ED constantly, and she's not having severe asthma attacks. It makes me feel a little more in control of taking care of her asthma."

AsthmaCare focuses on personalization, interaction, and an action plan. Users input their specific asthma triggers and medications, and they can set daily reminders about avoiding their triggers as well as when to take their medication. Whenever the patient experiences symptoms or needs to use their reliever medication, that gets entered into the app, which activates a personalized asthma action plan.

"With asthma, it's very difficult for a lot of people to take medications on a regular basis," said David Stukus, MD, a physician with the Section of Allergy/Immunology at Nationwide Children's Hospital and one of the lead developers of AsthmaCare. "We thought that we would provide a reminder system, along with other features that would help people better self-manage their asthma."

As the most common chronic childhood illness, asthma impacts quality of life for many children and their families. Missed school days, difficulty with physical activity and asthma attacks that don't respond to reliever medication are all challenges patients with asthma face

daily. Anyone can use AsthmaCare – even adults, if they prefer to use daily technology to help with their condition. Parents who use AsthmaCare for their children say that they like that it is customizable and easy to use.

“Asthma can be frightening for parents, especially for those of younger children who can’t always verbalize what they may be feeling,” said Dr. Stukus. “With AsthmaCare, we hope that we can give them the confidence to help really control the disease and make sure they administer medications on a consistent basis.”

AsthmaCare is free and available for iPhone and some Android devices by visiting <https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/asthmacare>.